

STRONG PHYSICIAN ALIGNMENT AND INCENTIVES MAKE MUNROE AN AWARD-WINNING HEART HOSPITAL

Case Study

100 Top Hospitals

Munroe Regional Medical Center

Munroe Regional Medical Center has won the 100 Top Hospitals®: Cardiovascular Benchmarks award 10 times — something no other hospital in the community category has done.



Munroe Regional Medical Center came from humble beginnings. In 1898, the hospital began on the third floor of a newspaper building. It's now a 421-bed state-of-the-art facility with 2,500 associates, 1,750 volunteers, and 450 physicians on its medical staff. Their mission is to improve the health of the community by delivering compassionate innovative care through exceptional people doing extraordinary work. Munroe Regional has received many awards for outstanding clinical excellence and for patient safety.

Marion County, the Florida home of Munroe Regional, has grown in population over the years, making it one of the fastest growing regions in the United States. Munroe Regional has grown right along with the community to meet its increasing healthcare needs. With this growth has come an increase in cardiovascular disease as the primary burden of illness in Marion County. Munroe Regional has responded by developing a nationally recognized heart program. From its inception in 1988, Munroe's open-heart surgery program has performed over 11,000 procedures with outcomes that rival the best in the nation.

To what do they owe their success? Munroe's success is built on a foundation of quality and patient safety combined with a successful physician alignment.

STRATEGIC PLAN SETS FOUNDATION OF EXCELLENCE

Munroe Regional is guided by a strategic plan that focuses on operations improvement, cardiovascular service-line development, and physician integration. The operations focus is on process improvement and throughput, while service-line development includes investment in new market initiatives, services, and employee development. Physician integration means incentives are aligned between the medical center and physicians.

The organization's core values include quality, compassion, respect, integrity, and responsibility. "Unless you focus on patient safety and quality first you can't hope for the rest. This is the overriding strategy that keeps our organization aligned," says president and CEO, Steve Purves. "Market share growth will follow this foundation of excellence."



MUNROE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Location
Ocala, Fla.

Category
Community Hospital

Awards
100 Top Hospitals: Cardiovascular Benchmarks
1999-2007, 2009

Scope and services
Munroe is a 421-bed state-of-the-art facility with 2,500 associates, 1,750 volunteers, and 450 physicians on its medical staff.



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EXCLUSIVE PHYSICIAN PARTNERSHIP DRIVES VOLUME

Cardiovascular care at Munroe Regional is delivered through Munroe Heart, which essentially acts as a hospital within a hospital. An important aspect of this dedicated service-line structure is an exclusive partnership formed with open-heart surgeons and cardiovascular anesthesiologists. The surgeons are employed by the hospital and have been practicing at Munroe for more than 22 years.

The decision to bring the surgeons in house was made to ensure volume and maintain quality of care. “We were being challenged by volume, and you need volume to command results,” says Purves. “Our surgeons were performing procedures at two hospitals, which was diluting volume and slowing productivity.”

The creation of Munroe Heart precisely aligned the goals of the physicians and the hospital and focused resources on delivering superior cardiovascular care. “We needed to change and evolve,” says Purves. “We could not have brought the physicians in house without an existing level of trust. This is a strongly independent group and they are sensitive to protecting that independence, but we have the same goals — delivering the best patient care.”

Dr. Lon McPherson, senior vice president of medical affairs and chief quality officer, says that Munroe has focused on recruiting the best surgeons they could find. “If you align with great physicians, you’ll get great outcomes. They insist on it,” he says.

COST AND QUALITY FOCUS DELIVERS SUPERIOR CARE AND VALUE

According to Pam Michell, vice president of patient care services and chief nursing officer, “For Munroe, the focus on cost and quality started early — more than 22 years ago in fact when I started here. We view the whole hospital as a team focusing on quality care without wasting resources.”

To maintain this standard, Munroe relies on metrics as an integral part of cost and quality. A few years ago, they discovered their “door to balloon” times were unsatisfactory, so the team set out to change.

The physicians worked with the rest of the staff to achieve an average door to balloon time of less than 50 minutes. Munroe implemented protocol-based procedures developed by leading experts in cardiac care to reduce time to treatment in the critical stages of a heart attack.

In March 2010, Munroe was designated as an Accredited Chest Pain Center by the Society of Chest Pain Centers. By working seamlessly with local emergency services personnel and departments across the entire medical center, not just the Emergency Department, Munroe assures that patients receive the best treatment available in a timely manner.

“We have successfully differentiated our hospital in the market. We have a great product to promote, which includes evidence-based medicine, quality, cost, patient service, increased volumes, and more than 75 percent market share.”

Steve Purves

President and CEO
Munroe Regional Medical Center

As a result, Munroe’s door to balloon times have decreased to an average of 43 minutes as of April 2010, with the shortest time at 25 minutes. This compares favorably to the national door to balloon time across the United States, which is 62 minutes, and the average time for the Top 10 percent of hospitals in the nation, which is 58 minutes, according to the 2009 American Heart Association’s Get With The Guidelines® report.



Some additional quality measures published in Munroe's fiscal year 2008 Quality Report show similarly promising results:

- 94.3 percent of patients with AMI received every recommended intervention, including use of aspirin and beta blocker medications on admission and at discharge, ACEi/ARB medications for patients with reduced ejection fraction, timely access to reperfusion, and smoking cessation counseling.
- CABG had consistently low mortality rates, including Society of Thoracic Surgeons ranking of 1 (expected rate).
- Appropriate antibiotic selection, with administration within 60 minutes prior to incision and discontinuation within 48 hours consistently over the 90 percent threshold.

"Our median cost to treat is \$2,000 less than other 100 Top Hospitals® award winners, and \$4,000 less than non-award winning similar hospitals. We are providing superior care while keeping costs low," says Purves.

SPREADING THE WORD DIFFERENTIATES AND GROWS MARKET SHARE TO 75 PERCENT

Now that Munroe Heart was in place with a top-notch team of physicians, the next step was to launch a marketing and public relations campaign to rebrand, build equity, and extend Munroe's reach to the south.

"We focused on building a much stronger heart brand," says Mike Robertson, vice president of planning and marketing. "This effort had a halo effect trickling down to other services, and overall strengthened our hospital brand."

Once again, Munroe closely aligned with physicians to help deliver the message to the community. "We started a physician lecture series – we had 50 sessions, with a total of 5,000 community attendees," says Robertson. "We covered a diversity of heart topics, depending on a community's interest, and started a community hospital touring program to invite folks in the region to tour our

facility and learn more about the services we offer. To date, we have toured over 1,000 community residents through our Munroe Heart program."

Community education has been an instrumental part in Munroe Heart's success. In June 2007, Munroe launched a Women in Red program. This program was established to increase awareness of the danger of heart disease in women. The mission of Munroe's Women in Red is to provide women with the facts about heart disease and promote heart health. As of April 2010, Munroe's Women in Red program has over 3,250 members. The success of this program led to the development of a Young Women in Red program, which was established in partnership with the Girl Scouts of America to teach girls to make healthy choices, promoting a healthier generation of women.

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LOOKING AHEAD

Munroe Regional is optimistic about the future, but also realistic about the challenges ahead. They will continue to focus on value, quality, cost, and physician relations.

"Value and quality will only become more important in the future," says Purves. "It's an absolute imperative for all hospitals to succeed in the future."

"And of course, organizations won't succeed without a successful physician relations plan," says McPherson. "Future success for all hospitals will require integration and alignment with medical staff. It's the only way to achieve success going forward."

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Thomson Reuters
777 E. Eisenhower Parkway
Ann Arbor, MI 48108 USA
Phone +1 800 366 7526

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